The Christian News-Letter

Edited by
J. H. OLDHAM

No. 62 JANUARY 1ST, 1941

DEAR MEMBER,

We enter on the New Year hedged round by two outstanding experiences. One is that many among us have known what it is to be driven from their homes and to lose at a stroke all they possess; the other, that our life has been enriched by an overflowing abundance of neighbourliness and human kindness.

SERVICE IN THE SHELTERS

Particularly notable has been the service in the shelters, though the splendid response falls far short of the limitless need. The full story of unselfish service by the clergy and by lay men and women can never be told. The following extract from a letter is typical of much more:

" Things have moved at a pace here, with the winter ahead and this abnormal life when thousands spend all evening and night underground, packed together like sardines. Some of us got busy, and we now have a Bermondsey Shelter Council which provides music and entertainment, which gets up discussion groups and classes of all kinds from arts and crafts to model parliaments and knitting parties. We are also trying to arrange carol singers and Christmas plays for all the 150 shelters. Part of our job is to provide voluntary marshals for night work in these shelters, which has proved a most important side to the work. As a visitor has put it, ' The shelters have now been made a home where before there was just a crowd of people.'

" The authorities are very keen on our scheme as there is real danger of the downfall of general civilisation under such ghastly conditions. We also see real opportunity of building up a new social and religious life. Our little services are just like those in the catacombs—bands of people underground, with little hope and much despair but great faith. We see visions of a new Church growing, which will bring fresh life into the Church that is."

A CHRISTIAN LEAD

A public declaration on the foundations of peace and of a true social order appeared in *The Times* on December 21st under the signatures of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of York, the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster and the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council. It re-affirmed the five peace points of Pope Pius XII and added five standards in the light of which the social order must be judged. The declaration provides a starting-point to which further discussion should be related.

THE SUPPLEMENT

The suggestion was made a few weeks ago that to train ourselves in the use of the Lord's Prayer, with the special intention of apprehending afresh in this time of darkness the truth of God's Being as Light and Love, might create a bond uniting us more closely with one another. The Supplement which accompanies this New Year letter has been prepared with the co-operation of several of our members. It takes this form because of the conviction that only in the strength that comes from prayer can we face with courage and hope a year of impending events and decisions fateful for the future of mankind.

The purpose of the Supplement is not to provide a new form of prayer for general use, but to stimulate and encourage each of us individually to discover for himself new meanings in the familiar prayer. It is offered as a starting point for meditation. It is also an attempt in part to translate into words of prayer some of the thought which has found expression in the News-Letter. The content is too full to be used as a whole at one time. One way of using the material would be to concentrate on one of the eight sections (combining the first two) on each day of the week; alternatively, each section may be broken up into three or more parts and meditation directed to different parts on successive days.

To enter into the meaning of the Lord's Prayer is to undergo a radical change—the most radical change conceivable, since our lives are thereby related to a new centre. The prayer begins by concentrating on God and His purpose. Our preoccupation with ourselves, with our hopes and fears, with our petty plans and schemes, is seen to be foolish and vain. Everything appears in a new perspective. We learn the deepest of all lessons—to accept our lives from God. We catch a momentary glimpse of what Christ meant when he said: With God all things are possible.

TWO GREAT PUBLIC SERVANTS

The closing weeks of the past year left the country poorer by the loss of two great public servants and great Christians. Both belonged to the group of able young men who were attracted to South Africa by Lord Milner's personality, who formed there a bond of enduring friendship and who have left their mark on the history of the present century. From this group sprang the quarterly journal, *The Round Table*, which has made a larger contribution to constructive thought about imperial affairs than has come from any other quarter. One of the two whom we have lost was Lord Lothian, snatched away from a task for which he possessed unique qualifications and at an hour when his gifts seemed indispensable. To those who knew him it was plain that for him religion was the fundamental thing in life. The other, less known to the general public, was his life-long friend, Lionel Hichens, who rendered to his country and the empire services too many and various to be enumerated here. Disinterested and public-spirited in the highest degree, possessing natural gifts of leadership and an extraordinary steadfastness of character, he was a strength to all who came into contact with him. The tribute to his character and work in *The Round Table*[1] for December will repay those who read it.

Yours sincerely,

J. H. Oldham

[1] Macmillan & Co. 5s.; yearly subscription 20s.

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PATER NOSTER

UR FATHER

Whom we know only through Thy Son,
od and Father of Jesus Christ,
reator of all that is,
Whose mystery no finite mind can fathom,
ove that enfolds and seeks us,
pirit Who dost call and command us,
to Whom our spirits can speak,
Thee we adore.

ather of those dear to us,
those who have wronged us,
those who vex us and try our patience,
the stricken in our own land,
the stricken in enemy lands,
the homeless, the interned and the prisoners of war,
all who have been made Thy sons through Jesus Christ,
all who in every land in diverse tongues offer to Thee the Lord's Prayer,
Thee we adore.

WHICH ART IN HEAVEN

hou art—
he everlasting I AM,
n Whom all things exist,
rom Whom they derive their being, substance and laws,
ternal Source of Truth and Goodness,
eyond and above all existences,
Thou Art.

Thou who art in Heaven,
Whose ways are not our ways,
Before whose Eternity our little lives ar
as flowers that fade,
From whose Eternity they take the
worth and meaning,
Whose mercy is unfailing,
Whose truth endures to all generations.

Thou art—whom or what shall we fear?
Thou art—Thou callest us to be Thy son
growing into Thy likeness.
Thou art in Heaven, whither we may i
heart and mind ascend and with The
dwell.

HALLOWED BE THY NAME

In the return of mankind from the fa
country to its true home,
the restoring to men of their lo
knowledge of Thyself,
In a recovered experience of their de
pendence on Thee,
a new reverence for Nature as Th
creation,
a new understanding that as Th
children all men are brethren,
Hallowed be Thy Name.

Let there be those who believe utterly i
Thy Name and through believin
bring back to the world a vanishe
glory.
Let the Son of Man when He comes fin
faith upon the earth.

/hen Thou remainest hidden,
/hen darkness is over the earth,
/hen the heavens are silent and life is a
hell,
/hen men cry to Thee in vain,
Ielp us to believe in Thy Name.

n our willing submission to Thy judg-
ment,
our acceptance of the discipline of
suffering,
our learning to live as Thy sons,
the enlargement of our understanding,
our patience, endurance and hope,
our growing likeness to the mind of
Christ,
Hallowed be Thy Name.

'o us mortals Thou hast vouchsafed the
revelation of Thy Name.
'he burden is too great for us,
Ve cast it back on Thee.
'hou hast made and Thou wilt bear,
Hallowed be Thy Name.

'HY KINGDOM COME

'or the prophets who foretold the coming
of Thy Kingdom,
'or its descent upon earth in Jesus Christ,
His revelation of the Father,
His life-giving Words,
His historic, creative Deeds,
'or the fragmentary realisations of Thy
Kingdom in human history,
the gleams that shine through present
darkness,
the transfiguration of our common life
by acts of heroism, endurance and
kindness,
We give Thee thanks.

Thy Kingdom come,
in the assurance to all nations of thei
right to life and freedom,
the deliverance of mankind from th
slavery of armaments,
the establishment of the reign of la
between nations,
the recognition of the rights of minorities
the submission of nations and govern
ments to Thy laws,
the juster distribution of wealth,
the enlargement of educational oppor
tunity for youth,
the honouring of the family,
the restoration of a sense of vocation t
work,
the right use of the resources of th
earth,
the rekindling of a passion for truth,
the opening of springs of mercy an
compassion,
Thy reign over every thought, affectio
and impulse of our being.

THY WILL BE DONE

In Thy will is our peace,
In the doing of Thy will is our fulfilmen
and our joy.
How terrifying, O God, is Thy gift o
freedom,
That men may refuse Thy will an
through refusal bring suffering o
themselves and others.

In the restoring and perfecting of th
world Thou hast created,
the quickening of the forces of life,
the affirmation of righteousness,
the growth of understanding, harmon
and unity,
Thy will be done on earth.

he Son of Man came to seek and to save
that which is lost,
o save the individuals whom we love,
to save and redeem mankind.
Thy will be done on earth.

n our acts this day, the words we speak,
the thoughts we think,
the fulfilment of our common tasks,
the relationships of ordinary life,
Thy will be done on earth, as it is in
heaven.

IVE US OUR DAILY BREAD

rom Thee we have our life and all that
we possess.
orgive us our pride and self-sufficiency,
each us to reverence the earth which
Thou hast made fruitful,
each us our oneness with those by whose
labour our food is produced and
brought across sea and land,
ill us with active pity for the millions in
our land who have not enough to eat,
for the millions in Europe who suffer
from the fear or the reality of famine.
s Thou hast given to man the knowledge
which can produce plenty, give also
the wisdom to bring it within the
reach of all.

hou, Who hast made us men, so that we
live not by bread alone but by Thy
Word,
eed us this day with the words of life.
et all that is divine in Thy world, let the
unsleeping power of Truth and Love,
possess us and work through us.
hou art Thyself our Life,
ive in us this day.

Forgive, As We Forgive

As we forgive—
We are but men, O God,
Thou art in heaven and we upon earth,
Dost Thou demand that we be perfect a
Thou art perfect?
With men it is impossible, but not wit
God.

Teach us to hate, as Thou dost hate,
the cruelty of the oppressor,
the contempt of truth,
the corruption of the young,
the lust of power and sinful pride whic
have brought the world to war,
the rage of senseless destruction.
Take from us the weakness of resentmen
and revenge,
Give us the capacity to understand,
Let us not include the guilty and th
innocent in a single condemnation,
Make us partakers of Thy infinite Pity,
Make us content to leave judgment to
Thee, the all-seeing Judge of all.

Teach us to hate, as Thou dost hate,
the sins we have committed as a privi-
leged nation,
the pride and exploitations of our
imperialism,
our callousness to the decay of the
bodies and souls of the unemployed,
the under-nourishment of children and
the denial of opportunity to youth,
the cleavages and divisions in our social
life.
Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive
those that trespass against us.

rgive us the egoism which belongs to
our nature,
the sin which is entwined with the roots
of our being,
the unforgivingness of our hearts,
the blindness which hides from us our
need to be forgiven.
pen our eyes to the wonder of Thy for-
giveness.
et it inspire in us a forgivingness and
magnanimity which can undo the
evil in the world and make atone-
ment for men's sins.

EAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT
DELIVER US

arkness is over the earth.
ut of the darkness,
the fury and cruelty of war,
the confusion and perplexity of our
time,
the vanity of human existence,
the struggle with forces that threaten
to crush the spirit of man,
We cry unto Thee.

et us not tempt Thee by demanding
that Thou prove Thyself God by a
miraculous deliverance,
et us know that, whatever happens,
Thou art God and our Father.

et us not be overcome by evil,
et not hope die or courage fail.
Deliver us from the fears and faithlessness
of our own hearts,
n the secret places of our souls enable us
to believe in Thee,
Make us in all these things more than
conquerors, through Him that loved
us.

Deliver us from the evil which infects ou
time,
from hatred and vindictiveness,
all forms of self-deception,
the over-simplification of moral issues,
insensitiveness to human needs,
reluctance to take responsibility.

If the days of tribulation may not b
shortened,
If we must walk through the dark valley
If earthly supports fail us,
Hold us in Thy keeping,
Assure us that neither life nor death ca
separate us from Thy love in Chris
Jesus our Lord.

For thine is the Kingdom, the Power an
the Glory.
Thou art sovereign Lord,
Sovereign over all the earth.
O Lord, in Thee have we trusted,
Let us never be confounded.

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